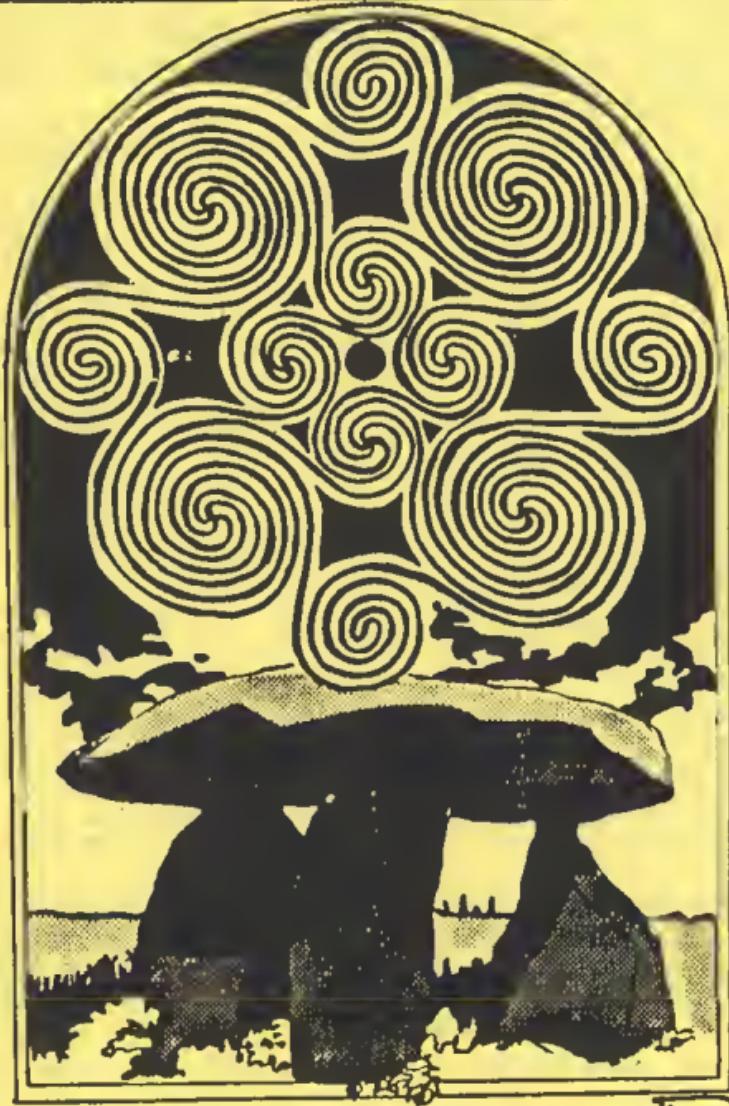


ADVENTURE PROBE



Vol IV Issue 1 January 1990 1:50



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EDITOR: Mandy Rodrigues, 67 Lloyd St, Llandudno, Gwynedd, LL30 2BN.

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HALL OF FAME

Sincere thanks to the following readers who took the time and trouble to send in contributions during the past month (bless 'em, they even remembered at Christmas time!)

Barbara Gibb, The Grue! Paul Avis, Sheila Simpson, Doreen Bardon, Jim Struthers, Sue Roseblade, Dicon Peeke, George Kersey, Paul Cardin, Nic Rumsey, Dave Havard, Chris Hester, Allan Phillips, Ken Bond, Michael Young, Will Orton, Lorna Paterson, Mike Gerrard, MerC, John Knight, Mike Brailsford, Paul Brunyee, John Schofield, Dave Barker, Vicki Jackson, Bob Adams, Kez Gray and Tony Brown.

Special thanks to Dicon Peeke for this months cover picture.

EDITORIAL



Welcome to Volume 4, issue 1 of Adventure Probe.

I must first of all thank everyone who sent me Christmas cards, I have never received so many beautiful cards. It was so nice of you all to remember me, and it really made this Christmas very special for me indeed. Some readers even sent me gifts which were delightful. Many thanks to Vicki, Hugh, Terry, John, Jim and, last but by no means least, Grue! who sent a very appropriate present which came straight from his very own cave. The blue vinegar hasn't evaporated yet, Grue, but shortly I should have a beautiful crop of crystalline cavern flowers. (How's yours coming along Nic, Bob and Neil?). I am feeling absolutely bloated with all the Christmas goodies. I frankly own up to stuffing myself. I am not going to make another public new year's resolution to slim down because, after losing 2 stones early last year I went and put it all back on again (sigh) and am as huge as ever. I blame all this sitting at the computer for it. Ah well, I suppose I shall have to resign myself to staying fat and jolly. I reckon my problem is being too short because, after all, if I were 6' 4" instead of 5' 0" I would look quite slim! It is small comfort, though, when you are told that you look like a beached whale in the bath!

I still haven't had many suggestions for a name for the new house and the only ones I have had have been a little unsuitable, such as, The Boggit, (sounds rather like a public convenience), The Happy Adventurer's Home (sounds a bit like a retirement home), Duntrillin (no comment) and Probus (sigh). Other suggestions received were Beg End (careful!) and Rivendell (well that's the prettiest one anyway). If I don't get any nice suggestions I think I will compile a list and get you all to cast your vote.

I asked Hubby to get me an Amiga for Christmas but he reckoned I said embo instead so he gave me another dog! Ah well, maybe next year. I did treat myself to some adventures and I'm looking forward to playing Bloodwych, Battlechess (sorry I shouldn't use such language in Probe) and Shadowgate.

Had some news which might be of interest. Topologika are running a special offer on their games until 28th February, each one will cost £11.95 inclusive of VAT and P&P so now is the time to buy. Avon is reviewed in this issue and is also included in their special offer. Martyn Westwood of Interactive Technology IPO Box 146, Sheffield, S13 7TY tells me that Dance of the Vampires and Deed End have been revamped and are now available for Commodore, Spectrum and Atari ST (£7.95 and £9.95). John Wilson of Zenobi Software tells me that he is now marketing Whiplash and Waggonwheel for the Atari ST and it is nice to see John branching out to include other formats besides Spectrum. There will be a review and further details in the next issue of Probe. Our Pat Winstanley (one of the founder editors of Probe) now writes the adventure column in ACE and tells me that she will be very happy to take a look at any home-grown software that authors would care to send in. If they are good enough they may even get a review so do send them in. Best of luck with the column, Pat.

Well, that's about it from me for this month. But, before I sign off I would like to wish each and every one of you a very happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year. I hope you all enjoy this issue, and I'll see you all again next month as usual.

Mandy

REVIEWS

SHOGUN



INFODCOM - Shop around for the best prices.
Reviewer - THE GRUE! - Played on Amiga.

The year is 1600. You are John Blackthorne, the pilot of a private merchant ship, the Erasmus. Not only do you have a sick and mutinous crew on your hands but you are about to become the first Englishman to set foot on Japanese soil.

The adventure begins with you aboard the Erasmus, a violent storm is raging and you must fight off your tiredness and whip your crew into action before the ship surrenders to the stormy seas. If you manage to survive the storm and navigate through a tricky strait you face a welcome of torture and imprisonment in this strange land of Japan. The Catholic nations have spread their political and religious influence as far as China and the land of Japan. Their knowledge of the Asian seaways is a highly guarded secret, covered by the English and Dutch traders and amongst all this there is a vicious power struggle between the feudal lords of Japan.

To stay alive you must be able to decide quickly who can harm you and who can help you, really you need to adopt this foreign culture as soon as possible for death is always nearby.

The game is split into various scenes and remains faithful to the book in almost every detail, even down to some of the strong language. You will meet Toranaga and Ishido, vicious enemies who will gladly take the lives of thousands of men in their struggle for the title of Shogun. You will also meet and fall in love with Mariko, your translator and initiator. There is a score for each of the different scenes and you do not always have to obtain the full amount to progress to the next, the game tells you when a particular scene is no longer winnable.

In the escape scene it is, however, impossible to obtain the maximum score and you will always end up 5 points short. For the second part of the escape scene you are confronted by an on-screen map representing the city of Osaka, here you will have to explore the maze-like city fully before you can reach the harbour. This part of the game reminded me a bit of the Telarium games who always seem to stick a stupid arcade type bit in the middle and it didn't suit Shogun all that well either.

The atmosphere of the game is first class and sets the scene well with its detailed graphics and rich descriptive prose but somehow it fails to really deliver. Apart from various scenes where you are required to answer questions that only Blackthorne would know the answers to, you often can just wait until it becomes obvious that you need to do something or you should have done something a move or two ago. For me this happens all too often and does not allow the player to really become engrossed in the story as one should. Some of the scenes require you to do virtually nothing at all but wait.



Shogun is also the first game to use Infocom's new parser, this will allow you to use a wider range of statements and questions to converse with the characters you may meet in the game.

Shogun has many great characters and brilliant text descriptions but in the end I would have preferred to sit down and read the book. I just couldn't manage to get enthusiastic about playing it although it is certainly not a bad game, it is not great either.

The packaging includes a copy of Blackthorne's map of the World and the legend of the Samurai sword. If you get stuck in this game and the stupid on-screen hints don't help then try this little phrase "Nihon go ga hanase-mason".

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS III

REVENGE OF THE ANTS

Available for Spectrum 48/128 price £2.49 from
ZENOBI SOFTWARE, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs, OL12 7NX

Reviewer - SUE ROSEBLADE



There was a great murmuring of discontent and then it all went strangely quiet. Adam, the first born of all the ants, turned towards the assembled masses. As if as one, they began to chant ... "Revenge... Revenge... Revenge..." Then with a loud cry of "We shall have REVENGE!" the army of ants set out in the direction of the small wooden hut.

This new offering from the confines of the Balrog's smallest room takes up the story where Behind Closed Doors (The sequel) left off. Those of you who've played BCD 2 will know full well why the ants are so bent on revenge. The adventure begins, then, with our hero in a very sticky predicament, and apparently in a most helpless position.

What to do then, while waiting for inspiration to strike? Well, to begin with you could finish the crossword, answer a quiz and read an adventure review. You could study the intriguing habits of the wildlife in your location, the spider, the flies, the bird, the cat. Whilst on the subject of the cat, you could ponder upon the reason for the cat's latest gesture in your direction. It may cross your mind to wonder what the Muffin Man is up to with your mousies. Then you could resort to examining the various parts of your anatomy, in fact it would be advisable to examine everything in the vicinity. A word of warning though, it might not be a good idea to hang around (so to speak!) for too long, because you will find that something very nasty indeed will happen to you if you do!

So now we come to the verdict on this single-location adventure from the Quill of John Wilson. Well, it's brilliant, superb, and I loved every minute of it! Buy it immediately, but if you haven't already done so you must play the original two BCD's first. It will add to the enjoyment. I think BCD3 is possibly the best of the three, and the ending was wonderful. (At least I think it was the ending!)

On the reverse side of the tape is a 3D arcade game entitled A STROLL IN THE BLEAK FOREST, featuring Bart Bear. I don't review arcade games because of my vast inexperience in such things. When I tell you that it took several minutes peering at the keyboard for me to locate the cursor keys you'll understand what I mean!

THE HOBBLE HUNTER

COMPASS SOFTWARE - £1.99 (INC.P&P)

Available on Spectrum 48/128K from Compass Software, 111 Mill Rd, Cobholm, Gt Yarmouth, NR31 0BB.

Reviewer - PAUL RIGBY

The creations of Messrs Lemon and Kemp were always eagerly awaited by myself. Adventures such as The Ozone, Microman and Demon from the Darkside are firm favourites. Interesting plots and excellent presentation have always been a part of Compass adventures. Not to mention their colourful inlays (Compass must be solely responsible for keeping the felt-tip pen industry profitable!). I was, therefore, sorry to hear that Tim Kemp had decided to break his partnership with Jon Lemon, due to health reasons. Since then Jon has produced Intruder Alert and now (extended drum roll) - The Hobble Hunter!

As Jon says, The Hobble Hunter is his, "...first attempt ever at a humorous adventure...". Which begs the question - Why, when adventure authors write a humorous adventure, do they nearly always choose a variation on The Hobbit!!! Okay, Compass have added a few twists, a vampire here and a giant there - but the origination of the characters, setting, etc is plain to see. The Hobble (Hobbit), Gorgor (Mordor), Middle Lands (Middle Earth), etc, etc. Is there no original thought left in the adventure world? I've heard of Hobblea, Boggits, Bulbo, Dildo, Dungo...Aaaaarrrrrrgggh!

Anyway, enough of that, back to the adventure. The Hobble Hunter (THH from now on) comes in a standard cassette box with another of Jon's colourful inlays adorning the front (I don't know where he finds the patience to colour in every inlay, I really don't). Compass have never skimped on the documentation and THH is no different. You receive a map of the Middle Lands of Gorgor and two fold-out pieces of paper detailing the plot, hints and tips and commands peculiar to this particular adventure (a thoughtful gesture).

You are Sam Gumbee, a Ranger living in The Shire. Seems there's trouble at Mith, though, because Mildu has turned into a vampire, killed Druand the dragon (he'll be talking about rings next) and pinched the ring of Gilthron (See?!? What did I tell you!). If Mildu finds the secret of the ring he will be able to bring a swarm of winged dark riders into the area. Obviously, then you must set off after Mildu and vanquish the foe before he causes any more mischief.

After playing through THH I must say that I was very disappointed with it. For example, Jon provides 20, of the 55 locations, with graphics. I am afraid they are a complete waste of time. I believe that some graphics were repeated because of a shortage of memory. In which case why include them at all? Why not improve the parser, vocabulary or whatever? The graphics add absolutely nothing to the game as they are bland and totally uninteresting.

Another gripe is that you tend to have to be very precise with your commands. For example, there is one sequence where you must feed a pony with a carrot. I tried "feed pony", "give carrot", and so on. Nothing worked except for "give carrot to pony". Rather unfair, I think. However, that is not the only example of unforgiving commands, there are others in the game. I was also rather confused with some of the logic applied to the plot. Whilst strolling through a swamp I became stuck. The only way of crossing the swamp was to ride the pony. Why a pony, a rather small animal not particularly noted for its strength, should have an easier time of the swamp than yourself is a

mystery - no explanation is given in the game. The real clincher, though, is that he is crossing the swamp with heavy oil you on its back. Compass may disagree with me on this but I found that area rather illogical.

Another sore point is that, if you don't immediately follow the dwarf at the beginning of the game, find the gold coin and get the parrot, the game becomes more difficult as the parrot is a rich source of advice. The problem is that the much-needed gold coin disappears soon after you see the dwarf so you need to be quick. I felt this was rather unfair, especially as it is placed right at the beginning of the game. As the player is thrown into a new environment it is rather harsh to present such an obscure problem without giving a hint or two. Even if mention was made of missing money, later in the game, so that you realize that a coin used to be there, would have helped. Compass mention that you don't necessarily, need the parrot to complete the game. Fine, but if you miss the parrot at the beginning of the game he becomes a complete waste of time and effort, on Compass's part, and a waste of precious memory for the adventure.

My last gripe is that you must eat regularly. This last point is more of a personal hate rather than a design fault but I do feel that it tends to interfere with the flow of play and is rather unnecessary. That sort of feature should only come to the fore during role-playing games where hunger could lead to a sapping of strength which lowers your defensive qualities or prevents you solving certain puzzles. In THH hunger just leads to death, so why include it at all? It emacks of a lack of imagination, which is a harsh thing to say about a Compass adventure, but erecting needless barriers for the player without integrating them into a logical, thought-out puzzle will only result in frustration for the player.

Having criticised THH I must emphasise that it is not a bad adventure. I have played far worse. THH is just decidedly average. There are one or two nice features such as you tend to receive some sort of warning that trouble is coming. Sudden deaths are relatively few, therefore. But there is not too much to get excited about here, I'm afraid. Maybe we will see Compass return to its high standards when Intruder Alert2, Microman 3 (Micro Mutant) and Shadows of the Past hit the streets. I certainly hope so.

ADVENTURES ON THE SPECTRUM

By MIKE GERRARD - price £4.95 and available only from:
Mike Gerrard, PO Box 7, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE17 2UZ

Reviewer - MANDY

I was delighted to receive my review copy of Mike's new book, *Adventures on the Spectrum*, and before you non-Spectrum owners start groaning, let me tell you that this book is for EVERY micro-adventurer! This 128 page book is packed full of useful and very interesting items that no adventurer should be without.

Mike very sensibly starts off with a section for beginners which includes hints, tips on how to get started. Advice on which games are most suitable for a beginner and very useful advice which experienced players will also find useful. There is comprehensive advice on mapping techniques and lots more.

There is an extremely interesting section on The History of Adventure Games. Advice on buying adventures and Mike gives welcome "plugs" for



some of our Home-Grown adventure houses too.

There is a section on specialist Adventure Clubs and Magazines in which, I am delighted to see, Probe features prominently. Mike says some really wonderful things about Probe - thanks Mike. This is followed by a very comprehensive section on writing and selling your own adventures. This gives very sound advice on how to go about things, which utilities are best for you or advice if you wish to write in Basic. Very sensible tips on setting up in business including bank accounts etc. If you are thinking of starting up your own software house then this is a must.

The book also contains a whole section packed with step-by-step solutions to 40 of the most popular adventure games and a comprehensive list of useful names, addresses and telephone numbers. I will certainly keep this handy for future reference as it includes software houses both large and small.

My first words after reading this book were "This book is great and not because it says such nice things about Probe either!" Our Sandra had a dabble in it too (see the words of thanks page). And, I got a SIGNED copy! That's three I have now (David Steel - A House Divided and Clement Freud - Clicking Vicky (no don't ask!)).

If you don't want to miss out on some of the best advice and adventuring news then I suggest that you send off an order to Mike Gerrard - RIGHT NOW!

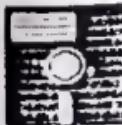
MINDWHEEL

Reviewer - THE WAYFARER played on Commodore 64

This game is actually an electronic novel which uses a rather unusual style called real time. For those unfamiliar with the concept it means that the computer keeps running except when actually paused by the player. If you sit in front of the keyboard pondering the next input, or are sufficiently unfamiliar with typing where it takes a while to input a command, you can find that you are talking to an empty space... the character that you are addressing has walked out of the room. It is also apparent in the way that unexpected things happen from time to time. For instance I was about to input an answer to a demon (there are 3 of them outside the Love room in one of the minds) when "One of the demons elegantly throws up in his hand". I can assure you that it took about 2 minutes of real time before the tears had stopped rolling down my cheeks long enough to put the game on pause whilst I regained my composure.

The minds (for you are electronically transported through the mind of certain key figures in our planets history) vary in difficulty and the problems and interaction also vary enormously. The endgame is one of the most fascinating I have encountered.

Sadly this game will only be found in secondhand shops, the company Synapse and Broderbund are no longer on the adventuring scene. I am reliably informed that some of the company's games were seen at the PC show in London on the Domark stand. Will this mean that these great adventures will become available again?... only time will tell.



"All hail, great master, grave sir! Hail! Welcome ever smiles, and farewell goes out sighing..." So reads the introduction on the packaging to AVON, the latest release from Topologika, described as a Shakespearean tragedy of our time.

The background to the story is provided in a letter written by you to your Aunt Jocasta, telling her about the strange things that happened on your recent visit to Stratford-upon-Avon. In it you talk of how your refusal to buy a brass cauldron seemed to offend the three old ladies in the antique shop; an ass's head in the museum looked you up and down; an asp in a pet shop tried to bite you; and the pharmacist quickly hid a green, bubbling potion under the counter when you went in to buy some pills for your migraine.

Maybe it was the effect of these pills, or too much travelling, or just a bad dream, but suddenly you had the strangest of feelings and noticed the scenery changing. The woods across the river looked like Scotland and the streets might have been Egypt, London, Venice - anywhere! You couldn't get your bearings. The ground under your feet was made of boards, which had you thinking that perhaps you'd strayed onto a film set. But everything else looked too realistic.

And the people across the river were pointing at you - and talking about you too: "Marry, 'tis a strange churl that standeth over there. Methinks it knoweth not the time of day!" You realised that you had somehow been transported into the world of Shakespeare's plays - and that you'd need to use all your wits to get back to the 20th century.

As the adventure begins, "You are standing on a flat plain. From here it seems that all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players: they have their exits and their entrances to the north, south, east and west." A quick wander through the adjoining locations can be made, but you haven't got long before it gets dark and you will need some form of illumination.

Very soon you come across three witches, finding that "You are on a wild heath. So fair and foul a day you have not seen. What are these so wild and withered in their attire? They should be women but their beards forbid thee to interpret that they are so." They will offer you eye of newt, toe of frog, wool of bat and tongue of dog, and you'll quickly realise which item to accept on this your first encounter with them.

AVON is basically a "find all the treasures and get them to the palace" type of adventure, but it's by no means easy and many of the problems will have you racking your brains for hours/days/weeks. A knowledge of Shakespeare's works is not needed although I found that what little I could remember from my schooldays (long ago!) helped in some cases.

Characters and events from The Bard's many plays are encountered every step along the way and I was surprised at how many of these rang a bell with me. You'll meet King Lear, Yorick, Portia, Cleopatra and Richard III to name but a few, and every one is associated with a puzzle for you to solve.

Different events take place on three different dates and parts of the adventure are only accessible at certain times. So, if you're sure something should be happening in a certain location, or if you get killed off when you try to enter it, then try at some other time. A fairly obvious example of this is what happens to you when you attempt to go into the Capitol on 15th March. You do, of course, get stabbed to death by several men in togas!

On many occasions when you meet your demise you are given the option of pretending you hadn't made that move - a bit like having had your position automatically saved. However, this doesn't happen all the time so regular saving is recommended. You will find, though, that you cannot always save when you want to, and this is because of the random set-up nature of some of the clues to their respective puzzles. An example of this is the one associated with King Lear who asks your advice about which of his three daughters he should leave the largest share of his kingdom to. You can't guess the right answer but it can be found in cryptic form in another location. Once you've been to this place you can't save the game until you've gone back and given him the answer. And it's unlikely to be the same daughter two games in a row.

You would expect a richness of prose from such an adventure and you certainly get this in AVON. Much of it is, naturally, borrowed straight from Shakespeare's plays and worked into a particular setting. For example; "You are at the bottom of a high cliff, at whose dread summit you can now see a creature above all strangeness. Methinks his eyes are two full moons; he has a thousand noses, horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea: it is some fiend." (Looks a bit like the Grue if you've ever seen him on one of his good days!)

Many of the responses are written in Shakespearean form as well. Try eating the bread - "'Tis excellent good, i' faith!" or giving something to the wrong person - "'Tis an ill-favoured thing, but thine own, and to take that ere no man will." There are a few puns too, like the one concerning the Moorish gentleman who mutters about someone called Des the moaner who once beat him at Reversi by cheating!

A verb/noun input is all that's required throughout, but the parser can handle multiple commands like DROP ALL BUT THE CAGE, GET THE STOCKINGS AND CALENDAR. THEN GO N, NE. In common with all Topologika adventures it is not necessary to EXAMINE anything. You're given enough information about objects and people when you come across them, and it is only by manipulating and combining them that their relevant features are revealed. Incidentally, you'll soon find out where to put your treasures, but don't be too keen to stash them away because some are useful objects - and once they've gone you can't get them back.

AVON is a large and complex adventure and you are almost certain to get stuck in a few places. If you do though, on-line help is available, structured in such a way as to give you clues to your particular problem before finally revealing the answer.

The idea for taking a look at The Bard's world through the keyboard of modern man came to the author, Dr. Jonathan Partington, a number of years ago. However, when he approached Acornsoft, who released his other title, KINGDOM OF HAMIL, they weren't interested and it lay dormant until Topologika decided to take it on.

It is an expensive adventure and this will probably put a lot of people off buying it, although I suspect that those of you who've only got a BBC micro will part with your readies because, to the best of my knowledge, it was one of only three 1989 releases for this machine by anybody. As an added extra, though, you do get MURDAC, a more traditional adventure (which I have yet to play), free with AVON which, I suppose, effectively halves the price.

Topologika are caught in a vicious circle here. Their previous release, RETURN TO DOOM, was also fairly expensive so not many people bought it, which meant that the next one would cost just as much (or more), so probably fewer adventurers would buy that! I fear that the inevitable result will be that we shall see no more offerings from this company, which is a pity because they have their own very distinctive style and I, for one, have gained much enjoyment from their adventures in the past.

AVON is an adventure with a very innovative setting but no coherent storyline. It's more a series of interconnecting puzzles woven around Shakespearean characters and events. I didn't feel very happy with it when I started, but the more I played the more involved I became. Just what The Bard would have made of it I don't know! But, if I had been introduced to the works of Shakespeare like this at school, I'm sure I should have appreciated them more and not have turned out to be the literary philistine that I am!

Reviewer - Neil Shipman - BBC

AVON (plus MURDAC, free) is available on disk only for a variety of micros including Archimedes, BBC, Electron, Amstrad CPC & PCW, Spectrum +3 and PC compatibles.

Prices range from £14.95 to £19.95.

From: Topologika, P.O. Box 39, Stilton, Peterborough PE7 3RL.
Tel: 0733-244682.

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LEVEL 9 - LEAVING THE SINKING SHIP?

By PAUL RIGBY

It was interesting to read the recent interview (Vol 3 Issue 12) where Mandy asked Pete Austin about the changes taking place at Level 9. Mandy's first question referred to the comments she had read in a magazine which attributed Level 9 saying that "the text adventure is dead". This is not exactly true, in fact I was one of the people who relayed Pete's words for a "glossy" or two. What he said was,

"People have been declaring the death of the adventure market for years so Scapeghost is an appropriate final release. It comes from beyond the grave and you play a ghost."

However, even though he does not, himself, declare the end of text adventures, the inclusion of the words implies that he agrees with the "people" he mentioned - whoever they are. If he didn't agree then why include the words at all and in a press release, of all things? Surely not for a chance to express a cheap joke? No, surely not.

I must admit, my blood boiled for a few minutes and large quantities of steam flew out of my ears when I heard that. The adventure market dead? Are Pete's words true, is he talking through his hat and particular areas of his anatomy or is he desperately trying to justify a dramatic turn-around by Level 9? Another interesting comment was,

"I believe that one reason for the lower sales of new text adventures is that former classics are still alive and well on the second-hand circuit and are taking market share. This is an unexpected consequence of adventures' long shelf-life."

Eh? Excuse me while I roll about laughing. Consider a few facts. If you look at other areas of the gaming market, the shoot'em-up for example, you will see, what appears to be, hundreds of titles. They swamp the market and cater for every computer format (new and "second-hand").

Shoot'em-ups have been around for years and yet they still prosper. The fact is, that although they abide by the same design rules and characteristics their graphics, sound, features and overall gameplay are constantly improved. They have maintained steady progress, keeping up with the market's hunger for "bigger and better". Reaching a point where you have to look twice to differentiate between some home computer shoot'em-ups and the arcade original.

The same ideas can be applied to any piece of software, no matter how crowded the "market". Whether it be wordprocessors, art programs or adventures. So Pete's statement about it being tough to sell new text or text/graphic (which must also be included) adventures in quantity is a load of rubbish. If the adventure is good enough it will sell. No-matter how many other "good" adventures have been sold previously. I'll give you two contrasting examples.

Before the Pawn's arrival there were many "good" adventures on the market, some of them from Level 9 themselves. However, The Pawn introduced something new, something fresh. Okay, it isn't perfect but the important factor is it brought the adventure market back to life. Even people who had never touched an adventure before were attracted by the stunning graphics and the advanced, if rather quirky, parser. The parser was praised because people said they could type all manner

of commands, with varying degrees of complexity. A bit different from the usual two-word command found on previous adventures. The second example, probably more extraordinary, was the success of Rigels Revenge. Here we had a, supposedly, cheapo budget adventure, the type of "low-grade", commercial software produced by the likes of Alternative and Mastertronic which you normally play once and throw in the bin (are you reading C.Sharp?), leaping into the upper reaches of the software charts. There was some hard work put into that game. Someone sat down and not only thought up the usual plot but spared some consideration for design. Again, not a perfect game, but one which drew much deserved praise. Both games were released in a, supposedly, overcrowded market and yet they were both singled out, put on little pedestals and, not only praised, but purchased in large numbers.

Pete's comments just don't stand up to even the briefest examination. Yes, people will buy old adventures - but only if they don't have them in their collections. In addition the latter are more likely to be enthusiasts so they will buy the old AND the new. The normal "punter" will always buy the latest game, no matter what. Level 9 have not suffered from too many people buying their old adventures - they have suffered from not enough people buying their new adventures. There is a very clear difference. I repeat, when The Pawn arrived on the scene even non-adventure players flocked to buy the game. Lots of cash needed, extra revenue filled the coffers of Magnetic Scrolls, therefore.

In my opinion Level 9's text/graphic adventures have not kept pace with their rivals and have paid the price with a lack of sales. Improvements have been slow to arrive. Level 9 have been guilty of complacency. A fact highlighted by the shock arrival of Magnetic Scrolls who, rapidly, became the top UK adventure software house. Level 9 tried to emulate Magnetic Scroll's graphics and ended up with washed-out watercolours which did not flatter the game at all. Improved graphics follows, but far too late to have any effect upon sales. Then they introduced the concept of wandering characters, character manipulation, etc. This system was never totally workable. With an apparent "overcrowding" of characters in Knight Orc and the many bugs and odd situations found in Lancelot and Gnome Ranger (see various back issues of Probe for a goodly selection of examples) I always felt that the later Level 9 adventures had an unfinished air about them. Their final adventure is Scapeghost. A good adventure, yes, but even Scapeghost would probably have never appeared if it had not been for Pete Gerrard and Sandra Sharkey, whose dedicated groundwork on the project set the wheels in motion. However, with all due respect to Pete and Sandra, although Scapeghost will be bought by adventurers everywhere it will probably not light the hearts of many non-adventurers. Whose patronage often turns a good game into a money-spinner. But then, Level 9 have been hard at work on HUGE throughout Scapeghost's development so why should they try to be innovative with it? Why bother?

Adventures are not dead - or even dying. We have the home grown adventure authors for a start, who have maintained a steady output and an increase in production quality which belies the enforced lack of funding available to them. But as far as the commercial software houses go I feel that we are going through a period of change. Magnetic Scrolls have not given up the text/graphic adventure (according to Anita Sinclair - although this is still uncertain). They have been working on a new adventure system for some time. Hopefully

we will see the results in the next couple of months. Infocom have recently shown some interesting innovations with the likes of Mark Blenc's Journey. (I was recently talking to Infocom's boss, Rob Sear. He mentioned that he was going to be making announcements about new releases during January 1990). Then there is The Hound of Shadow, Eldritch's new game (via Electronic Arts). Having had some time with an early copy it is, to my mind, the first game to successfully blend role-playing elements with a text/graphic adventure.

Hang on though, this game had been hailed in the glossies, features have been written about Eldritch, the Hound of Shadow has received very high ratings. But how can that be? The game's main feature is text. Out-of-date, staid, boring old text. Surely there has to be some mistake here? But it's not profitable, is it Pete? What's going on then? Maybe someone has made an effort? Maybe that is the answer. Pete Austin should take a look at Hound. It would give him a new insight into puzzles (and the answer to a question posed in the Probe-Austin interview on page 15).

The Hound of Shadow introduces the exciting Timeline system which allows you to leave your character from one gameworld and insert him/her into another. Think of it as an adventure with a variety of scenarios. Each "scenario" can be tackled in any order. Hound is the very first RPG which hardcore text-adventurers can play with no reservations whatsoever as it looks and feels like any other text/graphic adventure you may have played. It is heartening to hear from Eldritch's Chris Elliot and Richard Edwards who told me that just having a game with graphics cannot convey the right atmosphere. Even pictures of horrific happenings become staid after a while. They may that no-one has really bothered to develop the use of text - they intend to put that situation to rights. Good luck to them. It is only through text that you can create the correct atmosphere, an atmosphere that will be perfect for everyone as each person, using their own imagination, creates their own. As the Hound of Shadow is a horror story, Chris and Richard believe that only through your own imagination can you create the correct amount of suspense and fear. Text is the perfect vehicle.

ASK GRUE?

Holidaybubble Glue,

I humbly beg for advice. Needing to loose weight this humble person faithfully followed your recipe in the last issue of Probe. This humble person begs to inform you that it didn't work! In fact this pitiful edventular found to his horror that his stomach, instead of flattening, did swell to alarming proportions, to such an extent that Madam Phong in her areme did resort to a swoon! Where did this humble person go long?

Signed PHONG

Dear Yellow person,

As I did not invent the lentil recipe nor do I know if you followed my instructions exactly, your problems could be caused by quite a few things. Did you eat anything else other than lentils, like chocolate gateaux, spotted dick or any other fattening foods. If the answer is NO (you are obviously a liar too) then it is more than likely you did not fast a lot the next day. Until you do so, keep clear of naked lights, coal fires etc but, most importantly, DO NOT go to sleep with your head under the blankets!

INFOSCOPE 1990 By THE GRUE!



HELLHOUND (March 18 to April 21)

Don't eat any food beginning with the letter "H" such as Hamsters. This is not a good time to learn latin.

GRUE (May 20 to May 10)

Food will be in short supply, except for hamsters. Clean your teeth after every meal. Avoid going to the circus.

ORYAO (May 24 to May 21)

Buy a ferret. Go to a car boot sale. Sell any socks that you've worn for more than six weeks.

DORN (May 27 to May 25)

Don't go sunbathing. Stay in bed. If the temperature is more than 40 degrees. Phone Bob Adams.

BRDGHOOD (November 28 to May 19)

If you have ever robbed a bank, now is a good time to apologise. Wear a scarf if it snows.

BLOODWORM (November)

Use the number eight as many times as possible. Seek employment in organised crime.

YIPPLE (November until 3.00am)

Adopt a mollusk. Begin to hoard medical supplies and remove your dentists teeth.

SURMIN (November 3.00am)

Don't trust anyone, not even yourself. Carry a loaded shotgun on your person. Stay inside and keep your doors and windows locked. Wear a hotdog as a tie.

ROTGRUB (January 3 to November 28)

Consider making a new friend, preferably one who won't embarrass you in public by making loud snorts or grunts.

KOBALD (January 17 to January 3)

This is a good time to toast crumpets at high altitude. Convert yourself to metric.

ORC (anyone not yet born)

Don't talk to anyone called Bob. Be cautious of any clones that you have made of yourself in the last twelve hours.

NABIZ (those born in a funny position)

Commit lude acts, break promises and harm your neighbour in any way possible. Then make it up to him by painting his car pink.

PYRAMID

OBJECTS AND USES - BY ALF BALDWIN



1. GUN	Not required.
2. MAP	Route from Oasis to Nomads tent.
3. BOTTLE	Fill it with water to cross desert to tent. Refill it before entering pyramid.
4. BED	Snatch blanket off quickly, there's a snake under it. Then take a nap.
5. BLANKET	Soak it with water and wear it to pass through the wall of fire.
6. LAMP	It's dark inside the pyramid.
7. ROD	Insert it in slot to move slab at pyramid.
8. SHOVEL	Move bed to find it. Dig three times at bottom of pit.
9. ROPE	Tie it to hook to climb down into pit. Throw it to hook boat and pull it across. Tie it to iron spike in Circular Chamber (after untying hook).
10. CROWBAR	To open sarcophagus of minor official.
11. GOLD NUGGET	A treasure.
12. TREASURE CHEST	Contains King Solomon's treasure.
13. GOLDEN CLOAK	A treasure. Also wear it when you first pray at Shrine of Isis.
14. GOLDEN RING	A treasure. Also wear it to get sceptre.
15. TANNA LEAVES	Drop them by the mummy.
16. MUMMY	Talk to him.
17. BOAT	Board it to cross river.
18. BODY	Throw it in river to keep crocodiles busy.
19. BLACK PEARL	A treasure.
20. IVORY TUSKS	A treasure.
21. SCARAB	A treasure. Also insert it in slot to open door to secret shrine.
22. DEATH MASK	A treasure. Also wear it to pass mummy guarding golden room.
23. GOLDEN KEY	Unlocks golden treasure chest.
24. BUTTON	Opens sarcophagus in main burial chamber. Jump from ledge to push it.
25. SCEPTRE	A treasure. Must be wearing ring to get it.



HINTS AND TIPS



THE CUP

By VICKY JACKSON played on Spectrum

Examine branches in tree to find a nest.

Crawl limb to find gauntlet and then examine nest again to find dice.

Dig in the riverbed to find a black belt.

Wear slippers and mask and carry the chalice full of myth when you meet the priest.

Spray the can over the fur to look like a snowman.

Give the salve to the reaper for the loan of his acythe but remember you only have a certain number of moves before he takes it back.

RUNNAWAY

By CHRIS HESTER played on Commodore 64

Stuck at the start? - Don't hang about, pull your weight!

Trapped in the bedroom? - You need a drink of western tea!

Not sure what to do with the magnet? - Handle this with a more elastic approach!

Can't get the key from the jar? - The key is made of iron.

Unable to get the silver key? - Aren't your hands chilly in the garden?

Got the broken ladder? - You don't need the magnet to handle this!

Is the briefcase locked for you? - Look for 4 coloured numbers!

The phone rings three times, perhaps with a helpful clue!

Turn those taps!

The washer isn't empty!

FAERIE

By GEORGE KERSEY

Take the aspen wand and wave it to move from the glade.

Do not take the red shirt through the bull's field.

To cross the bridge say Good Morning (a clue to this can be found by reading the sign with the water glass).

Eat fish by the pond for help.

Open the window by the cottage to enter the nursery. Take the baby and give it to the fairies west of the southern fields.

SCAPEGOAT

By DAVE HAVARD played on Amstrad

Pick up the thistledown first, then build up the weights!

CUTTHROAT'S

By DAVE HAVARD played on Amstrad

Don't let McGinty see you carrying anything to do with diving or money!

Have the shark repellent ready as soon as you enter the water.

Light the torch before you enter the water.

Once in the water, and past the shark, just keep going down. If your co-ordinates are correct you will be at the wreck site.

NO 6 - IN THE VILLAGE

By JOAN WILLIAMS played on Spectrum

Slide door of laboratory.

Use your brolly to pass the waterfall.

A bit of warmth will enable you to read a note.

Knock on the door of No 2!

A boathook will help with the lantern!

MYTH

By GRAHAM WHEELER played on Atari ST
To cheat at cards - (in hut) EXAMINNT PATCH, HANG SHIELD ON NAIL,
EXAMINE WOODEN CHAIR (it faces the wall the shield is on), W, ASK
CHARON ABOUT LICENCE (he once gave one to cover gambling debts), ASK
CHARON ABOUT BLACKJACK, SIT IN WOODEN CHAIR (you will be able to see
Charon's hand).

JINXTER

By GRAHAM WHEELER played on Atari ST
To get oil from the plastic bottle - PUT BOTTLE IN FRIDGE AND CLOSE IT
leave it for a while and when you return the water will be frozen and
you can use the oil, by getting it in the Milk Bottle.

To unlock Xam's Mailbox - WARM PLASTIC KEY WITH CANDLE (twice) then go
outside and UNLOCK MAILBOX WITH PLASTIC KEY.

To find spectacles - LISTEN TO MAGPIE he gives you some spectacles to
get rid of you.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS III

By GORDON INGLIS played on Spectrum
Repeated whacks will help you crack it!
Participate in rude activity normally practised by fat boys after too
many pints of lager and hot curries!
Casting your gaze towards the heaven brings enlightenment!

A LEGACY FOR ALARIC

By GORDON INGLIS played on Spectrum
Get some big idiot to thump the warrior for you.
You'll have to make an impression (just like that!) in the inn whilst
the dwarf is Brahms!
Play at being Postman Pat for the farmer.
If you've not got dirty habits search the soft bush!

THE HERMITAGE

By JIM FISHER played on Spectrum
Don't kiss any strange women
In some cases you need to be a wet blanket!
Looking for money? Be a fireman
For a shortcut to the woods save a Joan of Arc!

KNIGHT DRC

By PARASKEVAS TSOURINAKIS played on Spectrum
To pass the troll: After taking reprogrammer and returning to the
earth WEAR THE VISOR so that everything returns to normal view, go and
find the dragon, now RECRUIT DRAGON, type DRAGON, GO TO BRIDGE and
immediately RUN TO BRIDGE, WEST, when the troll appears, DRAGON, KILL
THE TROLL, repeat until the troll gets killed. Now go WEST and OPEN
DOOR (3 times). Because sometimes the troll appears before you have
time to get in I would recommend GO EAST and WAIT until the troll
appears. Now again DRAGON, KILL THE TROLL and when it is done go WEST,
NORTH, GET WALLET and WAIT for the troll to appear.

PYRAMID

By MARGO PORTEOUS played on Spectrum
When at the pyramid EXAM SLAB, INSERT ROD, then you can go NORTH into
the Pyramid, first making sure you have everything from outside (you
may have to make another journey to the tent).

PUZZLE PAGE
A LOGIC PUZZLE by SIMON MAREN

HARD MURDER DAY AT NIGHT K NIFE E T D MEET Y D U H U R D E R T H E A D V E N T U R E W H E R E D R E A M S M I D D L E M A G I C S C I - F I C S P O O R E H O D U N N I T H A M I T I O N C O M P E T I T I O N A N I M A T I O N M U S I C S T I L L S P E C H

STEVE
ANN
JOE
FRANK
IRIS
ANIMATION
COMPETITION
MUSIC
STILLS
SPEECH
1
2
3
4
6
MAGIC
MIDDLE EARTH
SCI-FI
SPOOF
WHODUNNIT



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1. Ann, who did not write *A Hard Day's Night*, plumped for graphics.
2. The team of 4, which included a composer, couldn't think of a title.
3. Suspects in the whodunnit actually spoke during interrogation. One of the men worked alone.
4. Steve and partner, authors of *Knife To Meet You*, weren't into magic.
5. Murder at Mystery Mansion had cartoon animation scenes. The Middle Earth Sage involved a prize competition.
6. The largest programming team were responsible for the digitised stills in *Where Dreams Come True*.
7. A haunting melody played throughout the magical scenario. More than one person worked on the whodunnit.



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ZENobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 7HX



LETTERS

Thank you for publishing my letter in November's Probe. I must admit that, although I thoroughly enjoyed each and every one of my first six issues of Probe, I did feel that I had joined a well-established clique of adventurers who all knew each other; who almost all had Atari ST's; who all sent in tips for games which I'd not known existed; and who seemed to speak in a secret language of Frobs and Grues; and who all knew what PAW was (what exactly is it?). I was the rank outsider and didn't know how to become one of the elite. But I've cracked it - I'm one of YOU now! And what did I do? I wrote to you and you published my letter, if you remember, I asked about the "Adventure Planner". I was amazed - within a few days I arrived home to find two big brown packages on the doorstep. Both contained the very pads I'd been asking about. Christopher Hester and Neil Shipman had both sent me their own unwanted (and virtually unused) pads, and had both enclosed very friendly letters. Then a few days later, I received another package, this time from Larry Horsfield. Not only did he send me about 100 sheets of his self-designed mapping paper, but he also enclosed a long letter which helped to clear something up. If you remember, I applied to him back in April to be a playtester for his next adventure, and he wrote a very witty reply to my ultra-formal application. In the meantime he'd lost my address and couldn't contact me about playtesting. Then he saw my letter in Probe, and so contacted me about Axe of Kolt. He thought he'd upset me in some way with his letter! And then... I received a beautiful, chatty letter from Dava Havard, who I'm hoping to write to on a regular basis, and swap tips, knowledge etc. And then... I read June Rowe's lovely letter in December's Probe. I EVEN got a reference from the revered Alf Baldwin! I did a little dance around the room when I read June's letter. She's a grandmother AND an avid adventurer - it really cheered me up to think I can still be playing adventures when I'm a granny (although perhaps she isn't as old as I might be when the grandchildren start arriving!) I have replied to all four letters, and will write to June to thank her for her advice, but could you please print some sort of edited version of this letter (a) to publicly thank them all and (b) (most importantly) to perhaps let new readers know that they only have to ask themselves known by writing in to you, and they will immediately be welcomed into the circle of Probe adventurers, with open arms and more kindness and friendliness than I could have imagined possible. As my mum so rightly commented (and she's a wise old bird) IT RESTORES YOUR FAITH IN HUMAN NATURE. May I wish A HAPPY NEW YEAR not only to Probe readers but to you and your understanding family as well.

ALISON MARTYN, 2D Millbank, Burgess Hill, W Sussex RH15 8DD.

(Well, Alison, yours was such a lovely letter that I couldn't bring myself to edit any of it. I too think that adventurers, and Probe readers especially, are the nicest, friendliest people you could meet. They will always go out of their way to help whenever they possibly can. Now you can see why I always think of all the readers as friends, you couldn't hope to meet nicer people anywhere. Probe is such a friendly magazine and everyone soon gets to know everyone else both through the pages and through the helplines. But there is nothing we like better than to welcome new adventurers into the fold so, new readers, please don't feel left out. After one has read Probe for a few issues you will soon come to know all about Grues. Grue is our resident Infocom expert who, when not playing an Infocom game, takes great delight in "winding up" or playing practical jokes on

unsuspecting Probe readers. A Frob is some poor soul who has made a gaff whilst playing an Infocom adventure and had the misfortune to tell the Grue about it. Grue then decides, with the aid of his own "gurgle-meter", whether the person deserves to be awarded the title of Frob of the Month. This entails having his/her adventuring exploits and gaffs made public through the pages of Probe. I believe that each Frob receives a beautiful certificate from Grue to commemorate the event! PAW stands for The Professional Adventure Writer which, like GAC (Graphic Adventure Creator) and others are a useful utility to enable almost anyone to create their own adventure without the need to know much about programming. To any new reader who feels a bit left out in the cold, let me assure you that as soon as you have loaded your first adventure and entered your first input, you are one of us! New readers, we want to hear from you.....Mandy

Dear Mandy, Ladies, Gentlemen and anyone with a high morsel tone!! Bob Adams can be excused!

The short note from J. Masson was unreal, maybe he should pack up teaching and become a comedy writer. This would seem an appropriate career for one who thinks the whole episode of his criminal activities one big joke. Goodbye J. Masson you won't be missed.

Now on to other matters brought up in the December issue, first of all how WONDERFUL to see the return of Adams Hampsters. Did you notice that Bob made a mistake (no I refuse to give you Frob of the Month award, no matter how hard you try). Bob is under some illusion that I live in Merseyside (Fool of The Mersey), I reside in a small dark cave in Lancashire which is at least 2D Bloots from Merseyside! Also I did not make a mistake when referring to PD/Shareware, this was done entirely on purpose just to see what sort of clown would try and make a mountain out of a Yippe-hill. Congratulations Bob, You won! Seriously, if anyone does want a copy of The Golden Fleece you don't HAVE to give Jim a fiver, just a formatted Amiga disk and the postage. How come nobody mentioned the show at the Ally Pally? I wasn't going to go at first because of work but at the last minute was able to get the Saturday off, so off I lurked. Upon arriving I was greeted by a queue about a mile long perhaps they had all come for a look at The Grue but I'd forgotten to put on my Zork hat, pity nobody noticed it was sticking out of my pocket, otherwise the game would have been up. After wandering around for what seemed like ages I noticed someone wearing a red badge with JOAN PANCOTT - ADVENTURE HELPLINE, written on it go whizzing past. I tried to attract her attention but lost her amongst the crowd, I presumed it was her husband who was with her but could not be sure, damn fast those wheelchairs! Anyway I kept my eye open (I only have one) for other possible Probe readers on my travels, I did spot a very dejected and disappointed soul wandering about clutching a copy of TimeScanner but as this was not an adventure I decided this was not one of them. Eventually after a very boring time I spotted the turbo wheelchair again, only this time it was stationary. I was about to pounce until I noticed that Joan and her husband were talking to two other people, one male the other female. I lurked nearby and overheard Joan refer to the male as BOB. This was my worst fear (other than a naked light)... This must be BOB ADAMS, because Stuart Whyte told me that Bob was going and he was going to meet him (fool). So I thought better of it and swiftly slunk into the shadows once again. I did meet one friend of mine at the show so all was not wasted, the strange thing was she met another lady on the bus who sounded like a Probe reader but lost track of her once they got through the door, so I will never know for sure. I also spotted Larry

Horsfield, who looks just like the picture you published in Probe. Next time I'm going to the Commodore Show, see you there and look out for the hat!!

THE GRUE! 64 County Road, Ormskirk, West Lancs, L39 1QH

(I bet our Bob has shudders running up and down his spine at the thought of the Grue being so close to him and him not knowing about it. What a missed opportunity for some fun!.....Handy)

=====

I have enjoyed reading Probe very much. I wish I had known about it long ago. I have laughed until I've cried at some of the items published. My children think I'm barmy. I did not realise there were so many adventurers about. The joy to read that other people can't resist reading hint sheets, I thought only I did that. The game that first hooked me was Arkham Manor (I am still on side one). If anyone has a solution to this I would be most grateful. The next game I bought was Moonmist and that was it. Even the cries of "Mum I'm starving" didn't move me. Do you know if Mortville Manor is out for the Amstrad yet? I have read about The Secret of Little Hodcome in Probe and wondered if this was also an Amstrad game. As you have probably realised, this is the first time I have used a printer. I bought it for Dave my husband for Christmas. Needless to say he can't get near it for me or the kids. I would like to wish you and all the Probe readers a very Happy New Year.

PATRICIA NAYLOR, 40 Manchester Rd, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 1NG

(I have scanned all my lists and can't find Mortville Manor listed for the Amstrad so perhaps a kind Probe reader can supply the information on its availability. The Secret of Little Hodcome is by Zenobi Software (see their list in this issue) and as far as I know this is only available on the Spectrum, at the moment.....Handy)

=====

I had intended to adopt a low profile this month after a great deal of "over-exposure" in the Christmas issue. Unfortunately somebody decided to make a personal attack on me, that I believe deserves the "right of reply".

Many times in the past, I have asked or raised controversial questions, in the hope of receiving feed-back from the readers. There are never any Right or Wrong replies. Every reply and opinion is welcomed and it doesn't matter one iota whether the writer agrees or dis-agrees with my "provocative" statement. The fact that they have bothered to write at all, is reward enough. During the years that I have written to or for Adventure Probe, I have never tried to form an Adams Amsters Fan Club such as, agree with me and you are a friend for life. I am very open-minded and will happily listen to an alternative point of view, providing that the person disagreeing can explain their reason's in a logical and un-emotive fashion. Live and let live, has always been my motto. I have also tried to present my views in a light hearted manner.

It therefore saddened me to read Mr Terry Taylor "take issue with me". I don't mind him disagreeing with me but I do object to his putting words into my mouth. If he had read my original letter a little more carefully, he would have noticed that at no time did I state that I wanted Maps and Solutions in Probe. I was only indicating how readers

should attract the Editors attention, if they did. If that was his only blunder, I would have ignored it but no, he then went on to dictate to me what I should spend my money on, estimate how much it was worth to me and then finally accuse me of creating the eventual downfall of Adventure Probe!

Well Mr Taylor, as someone that has done a lot of work over the last few years, both visibly and behind-the-scenes, to help Adventure Probe, I RESENT THAT REMARK!

BOB ADAMS, 81 Uplands, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 7EH

(Yes, you certainly have done a great deal to help Probe, Bob, not only with your humorous and informative articles, interesting letters and hilarious stories but with your constant "moral support", constructive criticism and your sterling work in plugging away for Probe whenever you get the opportunity. As for you getting a great deal of "over exposure" in the December issue, on the contrary, I wish you would send in much more of the same, your articles are always welcomed by everyone.....Handy)

=====

First of all I must say, isn't Probe great. Every month I wait with eager anticipation for the postman to drop it through the letter box. Without Probe I think we would all sink into oblivion. What a great way to air your views, grumbles, joys, stories etc. One of the classic confrontations for a start is Bob Adams and whoever he decides deserves to be put on the end of his "wit prodder". I always read his bits first, he has a way with words that makes me think that in his past life he was a BARD. Adams Amsters is great. I hope he never stops but I think Amsters only live a short life (especially if you only feed them on a diet of nuts!) Perhaps the GRUE can advise Bob on the proper feeding requirements of an Amster to make sure it has a prolonged life. Being an "Agony Uncle", perhaps the Grue can help me out with a small problem. I'm having trouble paying my electric bill because of all the juice my computer uses (being on nearly all night). Any helpful suggestions Grue? Ideas gratefully accepted. However, I don't want the same reply as answer number 5 in the December Probe. Doing such a deed in front of my computer will only lead to total power failure! Moving to another subject, I was wondering if there is any truth in the rumour that the Tartan Terrible Trio are to form a consortium in order to stand in a mug-shot line up to discover who rules the Scottish Roost (i.e. the best-looking wins). Aren't they great those three Highlanders, Tom Frost, Lorna Paterson and Mike Brailsford. Always sticking up for the North. Yes, we are a great lot, us adventurers from North and South plus in between. Long may our lumen reek. A real pleasure to be part of Probe every one of us. Quiet and Noisy characters alike. Now a small grumble to end before we all get smug. We want a bigger, thicker, double issue of Probe. We can't do without it. Now I have to wait another month for the best read in town. By the way, H.Pilg Joen, you weren't by any chance in a program called Allo Allo as a funny speaking soldier I suppose - brilliant! keep it up and let's have more!

JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Disraeli St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland

(If there is a contest to see who wins the best looking of the Scottish Trio you mentioned, it is no contest, Lorna will win it hands down! As for a bigger, thicker, double issue of Probe each month. Well there is nothing I would like more but, and it is a big but, a few

extra pages may not seem like a lot but when you have 400 readers that amounts to a few extra reams of paper, heavier postage costs (unless you can get away with it, phew) extra photocopying expenses etc and it just cannot be done on a regular basis. Probe would fast shoot into the red and have to end if I did that. The little extra with the Christmas issue was my, very small, way of trying to say thank you to all the readers for all their contributions, help and support throughout the year. If I did that every month there would be nothing special to do to celebrate Christmas. I am delighted that you appreciated it though.....Handy)

=====

Firstly, could I wish both you and all Probe readers a happy and prosperous New Year. Would you also let me thank Mike Gerrard through your pages, as I always end up insulting him (in a friendly way, of course) when I write to him, so THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP MIKE!

JILL CARTER, 280 Burgoyne Rd, Walkley, Sheffield, S6 3QF

=====

OPEN LETTER TO CAT

I am sure glad that we have cleared up the confusion about who is in charge at ZENOBII! You certainly have my sympathies at having to deal with that WILSON person! Also, I am gratified at having been given the opportunity to complete your education by letting you know that an OPEN LETTER is a way of gently pulling someone's... (leg doesn't fit, think again!), in public AND getting away with it! (or not... it just depends on the whim of the editor!).

I always suspected that EKIM was open to a bit of bribery, not that we at TARTAN would ever stoop to such subtleties, that really means that I wish I had thought of it. He certainly is a devious individual though, as I found out at the IRON JUG AWARDS CEREMONY... his order during a round of drinks was for "a glass of red wine", but he had previously bribed (there's that word again!) the bar-tender person such that the "glass" was a pint mug and the contents were WHISKY and COKE in the proportions of 1 to 1 (it did look like red wine)... no wonder he asked his BBC-adventure-writer-person (John Ryan, I hope you are keeping better company these days) to drive, when he EVENTUALLY left the premises! I was still there ONLY because my train back to civilisation from the corrupted south departed at midnight. (Thanks for the lift to the station, John, EKIM obviously did not recover, as his recent ramblings in YOUR SINCLAIR confirm!)

You really want to know from where I got your recent adventures? Well, those of us who remain in this beautiful land of Scotland still adhere to the traits that made us famous... i.e. we waste nothing! So, when I was offered a couple of the original tapes of your (admittedly excellent) publications from friends who had received two copies from ZENOBII (an obvious administrative error... I would ask sack that WILSON person, I could not possibly refuse. Now THAT must be a better story than yours for obtaining a copy of DOUBLE AGENT! Did you really think that I believed your story about producing a tape of the BEST OF THE INDIES, and could you please have a master copy of DOUBLE AGENT to include on it. I mean to say, the royalties offered were such that it made the whole project absolutely unbelievable! Now prove me wrong, and I will be delighted! Incidentally, I would be interested to know exactly where Jack Lockerby was wearing his socks! The next "white pudden-lookalike" that you MIGHT receive from here will be a HAGGIS and it will walk all the way to Rochdale.

Watch out for the Masson effect... I hope it never strikes your gamest
Now, there we may REALLY require the telephone number of the man from
DELMONTE (or do I mean FAST?)
Hoots mon the noo.....Tartan Tam.

TARTAN SOFTWARE, 61 Baillie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, Angus, DD10 8DT

it was me who submitted yours and many other Probe readers addresses to MENSA and I must apologise to you. I didn't foresee, at the time, the position it would put you in, and that it would upset some readers. The idea was well-intentioned, so I do hope I haven't upset too many people. My sincere apologies though, to anyone who has been inconvenienced by this.

PAUL CARDIN, 3 Lonsdale Villas, Wallasey, Merseyside, L45 4PG

I really appreciated you writing in like this, Paul. I also admire you very much for "owning up" so to speak. A lesser man would probably have sat back and left us wondering and non the wiser, as the easy way out of the situation. Come to think of it, I am quite flattered that you considered my intelligence such that it should be brought to the attention of MENSA.....Mandy)

Many thanks for a friendly, warm, chatty and informative magazine, Mandy. Anyone who can move house and still get an issue out on time earns my undying admiration - you are super-efficient for sure! Keep up the good work. I wouldn't be without Probe now. Henry M did me a good turn by "closing down" ACL and pushing me in your direction.

ANNE BORLAND, 2 Darle Ave, Canvey Island, Essex. SS8 8EN

Today (28th October) I received a letter from the famous (?) Adventurers Club, explaining what had happened in the past, apologising for the lack of communication and informing me that in future it will be in a different format, but much superior. Also ideally you will require an Adventurer's Deluxe Binder for your Reference Book of Adventure, priced at £7.85 but to you at only £6.85. I remember the Adventurer's Club Limited. The monthly dossiers that arrived late. The change to bi-monthly dossiers (for your benefit), that arrived late. The two long periods when there were no dossiers etc... and no reasons why. The telephone helpline that was permanently engaged. The arrogant replies to you if you happened to criticise it (everyone else is very happy etc...). The only thing I am grateful for is becoming acquainted with Jack Lockerby and Hugh Walker the Scourge who kindly and thoroughly playtested and debugged my game (no plugs). And I think of Probe that is run by and for adventurers, that is a joy to receive, that arrives on time, has numerous very helpful helplines and has Paul Biunyee giving my game an excellent review (yet another blackmail cheque in the post). What is my reaction to the request for £6.85 for my Deluxe Binder. Are you familiar with the expression "Good money after bad", or to put it another way... how many P's are there in suppository.

IAN S BROWN, 1 Amanda Road, Glen Parva, Leicester.

Thanks for the bumper Christmas special Adventure Probe!! Perhaps readers might like to know that having declined Mr Mueller's kind offer of a deluxe binder and future information I merely asked for, and was given, a refund on the old ACL sub... I suggest that all and sundry who were, like me, somewhat miffed (polite way of saying it!) at the lack of response for the past many months from ACL simply do the same thing... and send the refunded dosh to you (as I did) for a guaranteed "good return on their money"... at the start of every month in fact!!

By the way, despite a few plugs about my wonderful fast service could you intimate that I have stopped flogging cheap games (via Sandven of course!!) due to lack of interest and response and will now be a normal adventurer at the retail end myself again!

GORDON INGLIS, 11 West Mayfield, Edinburgh, EH9 1TF

(I am happy to hear that you managed to get your outstanding subscription money refunded by ACL. I am sorry, though, to hear that you have stopped the cut-price Spectrum adventure service of Sandven, through lack of support. I know that you did your very best to provide a fast, efficient and reliable service of good quality adventures at a budget price and received many letters praising your service. It is a pity that, at a time when the adventure market seems to be going through a sticky patch, someone who is doing their best to keep it alive should get such little support.....Mandy)

=====

Thank you for my first copy of Probe which I received a couple of days ago. I found it most informative and interesting, at least it appears that I have found a journal worth buying, with a mature readership. As a long term owner of the original dead-flesh keyboard (full 48k), and latterly a CPC6128 I have witnessed a few changes in my time. When I first purchased the Spectrum, Fantasia Diamond and Valhalla had just been released. As I intended then only using it for programming and playing adventures, these were among my first purchases. The Hobbit, and Clasic Adventure soon followed. It took me quite a while to find that many journeys were no more than word matching exercises, and that trying to "live the game", was not the way to solve them. After that my tastes changed to strategy and simulation software for a while, but I could never completely resist the lure of a good adventure. So it was that when I purchased a second hand CPC6128, mainly to do more serious work, it wasn't long before I was on the lookout for Infocom adventures. Considering I have only had "Amy" for eight months I am well pleased with my current score of eleven titles. I am still looking for a few more though.

I recently attended the Personal Computer Shopper show at Ally Pally. Phew what a climb! I'll never forget the feeling of walking up that interminable hill with the building appearing to get no nearer. Neither will I forget the disappointment of finding nothing that interested me. One of the most depressing things about the show was the number of stands that only catered for 16 bit machines. Although there are a lot of more mature users for them, I am sure that the younger element will soon drag the level of software down to the current 8 bit level, i.e. "If it moves - blast it!" (or kick it)! This is one of the changes I have been appalled with over the years. One of the better things about Probe is, as I said earlier, it's mature readership, and I would be sad to see it go the same way as Crash, Your Sinclair and Sinclair User. It is for this reason, even as a "new" reader, that I raise the following points. Rabbit's Tale. Am I

missing something here? It seemed utterly pointless. The letter from CAT of Zenobi. Surely someone who is able to write for a software house should be able to express theirself better than resorting to childish adjectives. Is this the result of an editing policy not to cut letters, or are you, Mandy, happy to include such comments. I am aware that much worse can be seen in top line computer magazines such as those I have mentioned above and lately C&VG, but this has been the thin end of the wedge for many publications, and if not stopped, will, in my experience, take over. Has anyone tried The Guiding Light telephone helpline? I have heard so many derogatory remarks about various 0898 numbers that I am very sceptical about how helpful they really are and how long they will try to keep you talking. Personally, I would much rather call a fellow adventurer, and have a good chat, at normal phone rates, knowing that they are fellow enthusiasts, than have someone try and keep me talking to make them more profit. The Guiding Light may well be an excellent service, run by well meaning, informative people. If so, I not only apologise, but feel that anyone writing in to complain about this point will more than make up for my query.

I have also a couple of messages. Joyce Furlong, don't despair, dear Frob, for I too attempted to attack the cloaked stranger in Zork 3. Mind you, I had just bought it, and was simply having a quick runaround, to ensure it loaded and ran OK. (Well, that's my excuse and I'm sticking to it!). Larry Horsfield, please continua with the PAW series, especially if it relates to the C/PH version that runs on my CPC6128. I especially need routines to make use of the "extern" command so that I can use graphics generated on the Advanced Art Studio. Balrog of Zenobi, are you the same Balrog of Amstred Action?

DAVE HAVARD, 21 Belvoir Close, Farham, Hants, PO16 0PJ

(A very interesting letter, Dave. You raise one or two points that need answering so here goes. It isn't my policy to publish each and every letter that is sent in regardless, in fact, because my name and address appears in various magazines I have received some letters and received telephone calls that have been obscene at times. These, naturally, are consigned to the bin straight away. I try not to publish any letters that knowingly could cause offence and hope that each letter I do publish raises a point of interest. Sometimes it may seem that a letter is insulting to another reader when, in fact, there is a firm friendship between the two parties, i.e. Bob Adams and Grue. Tom Frost, John Wilson and Mike Gerrard. I think, perhaps, as a new reader you have missed what it was all about. The letter from Cat was in reply to an open letter from Tom Frost of Tartan Software and, despite appearances, it was all supposed to be "taken in good fun". I have been assured that Mike Gerrard didn't take any offence at the remarks and everyone remains the best of friends. The Guiding Light Helpline is run by adventurers who offer a friendly, speedy and very helpful service. I assure you that they would never willingly take longer than necessary to answer a call for help for their own gain. I say this because I know the people who run the helpline. They are, in fact, long term Probe readers and even had, until a short time ago, our previous editor, Sandra Sharkey helping to man the phones. At various times members of Guiding Light have telephoned me to ask for help on a particular adventure so that they can ring the person back with the information they require. Anyone who rings them can rest assured that they won't keep you hanging on or talking to run up the phone bill.....Mandy)



HELP WANTED

"I am stuck in LEGEND OF APACHE GOLD, could someone please tell me how to get rid of the crocodiles and get into the canoe at the fast flowing river? I am playing the Spectrum 48/128K version."

SHEILA SIMPSON, 26 Sir William Turner Court, Kirklaatham, Redcar, Cleveland, TS10 4QU.

=====

"Please could someone help. I have been stuck in MINDFIGHTER for months now and have only managed a few tasks on the first level (giving Daryl the snowstorm, finding the shelter and feeding the foxes). Does anyone have any suggestions or clues to get me going again (like how to board the ship or what to do with the crates)?"

GEOFF WALLIS, 51c Elder Avenue, Couch End, London N8 8PS



IN-TOUCH

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"Now that I have your undivided attention, can I ask anyone who may have JACK THE RIPPER for the CPC464 to please contact me in the hope that I can purchase it. Someone out there must have it for sale."

JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Disraeli St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland

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FAMOUS LAST WORDS

By DAVE HAVARD

I was amused by the Adventurespeak article in the last issue, and felt inspired to write these "famous last words":

1. "Just coming, dear, I'll just try one more location....."
2. "My tape/disc works well enough. No I don't need to verify my saved positions....."
3. "Of course I won't starve. I'll just ask this N.P.C. to give me some food in a minute....."
4. "It's easy to move around in the dark when you've made a map" (Hello Grue!)
5. "The reviewer said this game had a random death routine in it, but I haven't found it yet....."
6. "Of course you won't fall off the cliff if you go east, it'll give a warning first....."
7. "I wonder what happens if....."
8. "Oooh! Look! An "Amazing Gate"! I wonder what's on the other side?"
9. "Sorry, dear, I'll just get out of this maze and I'll be with you."
10. "We haven't had a power cut for years....."

(Anyone else got any famous last words?.....Handy)

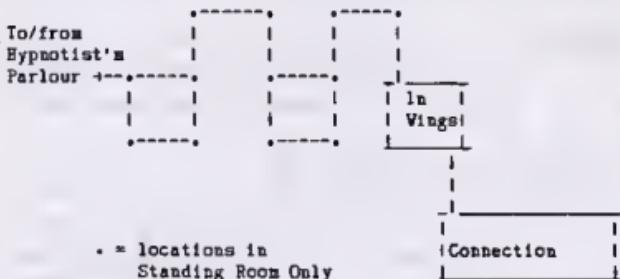
SERIALIZED SOLUTIONS

The Wayfarer's Guide to BALLYHOO, Infocom. Played on Amstrad PCW.

continued.....

You find that you have been transported to the standing room only part of the audience. WAIT, G, G, G until a vendor arrives. GIVE GRANOLA (or whatever edible item he is selling). GIVE MONEY TO HAWKER, the crowd surges and you lose the hawker (but don't worry you will find him later). GET UP, G, U, E, D, E, U, E, D, S, to connection where a monkey inexplicably lands on your shoulder.

Standing Room Only map.



You are standing near a small concession stand, GET IN LINE with everyone else and WAIT. G. GET OUT OF LONG LINE, GET IN SHORT LINE, WAIT, G. A large party of men push in to the line, at the invitation of the man in front of you in the queue. GET OUT OF LONG LINE, and when your inner voice talks to you, YES. GET IN LONG LINE, lots of people have moved to the short line so you are served immediately with a chocolate covered frozen banana. EAT CHOCOLATE, DROP BANANA to the delight of the monkey who grabs it and goes away.

I back to the wings where the hawker is taking a break. TALK TO HAWKER and he tells you that the man next to where you were sitting has your granola bar. U, V, D, V, U, V, V to where a man hails you and throws you the granola bar. You fumble the catch and it falls through and under the stand. You wake, back on the couch, in the hypnotist's parlour (scoring another 10 points, 40/200 at present).

GET UP, S, W, SIDEWALL TENT and you crawl under the wall of the tent and arrive under the bleachers. With a feeling of Deja Vu you EXAMINE GARBAGE, GET GRANOLA, S, E, E, N, to the west half of the fat lady. SE and after a long walk you are at the east half of the fat lady. There is a useful looking stool here, so GET STOOL. But remember your manners and GIVE BAR (or whatever you bought from the hawker) TO TINA. This has drawn you to her attention, so speak to the lady. TINA, HELLO. She extends her hand, so GET HAND, KISS HAND.

SV, to the west half of the lady where a radio/cassette recorder has appeared. GET RADIO (and 10 points). S. V. V. S. SE. # to the inside of

the cage. A bucket containing some meat is here, also some headphones. GET BUCKET AND HEADPHONES. S, DROP BUCKET AND HEADPHONES. NW, N, V, DROP BUCKET, POLE AND STOOL. V, S, UNTIE BALLOON, INHALE HELIUM (score 10 points). TALK TO BARRY who, as he is blind and helium constricts the vocal cords, assumes that your squeaky voice belongs to Thumb and opens the gate. S to camp east, EXAMINE TRAILER finding a locked compartment. UNLOCK COMPARTMENT, OPEN IT and you find it contains a whip. GET WHIP. V, to camp west.

WEAR SUIT, WEAR MASK. KNOCK ON DOOR. You are mistaken for a clown, S into the trailer where an interesting ash tray is apparent. SEARCH ASH finding a scrap of newsprint, GET SCRAP (10 points) and at Chuckie's request CLOSE DOOR. WAIT until you are thrown out and REMOVE SUIT, DROP IT.

E, N, V, SIDEWALL TENT, E, N, E, GET ALL (bucket, pole and stool), E, E, to the ring. (10 points.) UNLOCK DOOR (to lion cage), OPEN DOOR, GET MEAT, V, into the lions' den where a smooth-bodied lion and a shaggy lion are. WHIP SMOOTH, G, G to get the lion to lie down. OPEN GRATE, THROW MEAT IN GRATE. As the lions are nervous of you, E, while they go after the meat. V, CLOSE GRATE imprisoning the lions, LIFT THE STAND and you find a cigarette case which you pick up. (10 points.)

E, DROP WHIP AND POLE AND STOOL. S, S, V, S, GIVE CASE TO BARRY. You are told that it belongs to Andrew (the male half of the Andrew/Jenny double act). You are also told that Jenny doesn't like him to smoke and that she would be angry if she found out that he had done so (they are twin identities in the same body). V, GET WOOD and when prompted OUCH, OUCH. EXAMINE WOOD reveals it to be a mousetrap complete with cheese. GET CHEESE, PUT CHEESE IN TRAP. DROP TRAP. S, N, S, E, until you find a mouse in the trap eating the cheese. PUT BUCKET OVER MOUSE. (10 points.)

Score is now 100/200, E, N, E, PUT TICKET IN SLOT, E, S to the menagerie. Bannibal the elephant bars the way into his tent, GET MOUSE, SHOW MOUSE TO ELEPHANT, G, WAIT whilst Bannibal stampedes through a fence to the sw. (10 points). SE, DROP ALL. GET RADIO AND HEADPHONES. U to the top of the cage where the radio/cassette recorder should function better. TURN DIAL TO 1170 to find some soothing music. REWIND TAPE, WAIT, RECORD, WAIT, G, G, G, G, until the counter reads 434. REWIND TAPE. D (you will be told that you have died but ignore it!!), GET ALL, NW, V into Mahler the Gorilla's cage.

PLAY TAPE, and Mahler takes the headphones over to a corner to listen to the music which "bath charms to soothe the savage beast". MOVE STRAW and you find a trap door. OPEN TRAP DOOR (10 points), to find a compartment empty save for a red ribbon. GET RIBBON. E, N, V, FILL BUCKET at the fountain, PUT TICKET IN SLOT, E. Here you can see the defective(!) sleeping on the job, POUR WATER ON DETECTIVE to sober him up. ASK DETECTIVE FOR NOTE. READ NOTE, DROP BUCKET AND RADIO. GET NOTE AND CARD. EXAMINE RIBBON, EXAMINE CARD, COMPARE RIBBON TO CARD. E, S, U to Jennifer's Boudoir. SHOW CASE TO JENNY (10 points) who realises that

To be continued.....

SERIALISED SOLUTIONS

The Wayfarer's Guide to Sorcerer (part two of the Enchanter Trilogy)

continued.....

It would probably be a good idea to have some protection so LEARN GASPAR. GASPAR ME. As you are beginning to tire it would be good idea to find somewhere to sleep. E to a meadow (where a swarms of bloodsucking locusts appear on the horizon. Don't dally in the Meadow and they present no threat), NE to the bank of a river. A somewhat dangerous bank which has a habit of dropping you into the fast flowing river, so it is wise to be wary and keep yourself Gaspared. SE takes you to a Fort entrance, E takes you to the Parade Ground. A tattered flag flies from the flagpole. LOWER FLAG, SEARCH FLAG and you find an aqua vial in a secret pocket. GET VIAL and as you are feeling tired SLEEP. The parade ground has entrances to the s and n, both are useless to the completion of the Adventure. E takes you to the gun emplacement where you will find a cannon containing a scroll. Leave it for the moment as it is guarded by Yippies, a nasty little beast which can change its shape to look like objects and give a nasty bite to the unwary.

LEARN GASPAR, PULVER. Since all additional spells that you have learnt vanish from your memory during sleep, GASPAR ME, and go out of the Fort by W, NW to the river bank. PULVER RIVER to temporarily dry up the water flow. D into the river bed. The flow of water is stopped for only about 3 moves so don't try going nw to the stagnant pool or se to the waterfall as you will be swept away when the flow returns. NE takes you into a hidden cave which has appeared beneath the now receded water. This opens up a new section of the game to you, and gives you an additional 20 points on your score.

In a corner of this cave lies a pile of bat guano (how polite??), a scroll and an amber vial. GET SCROLL, READ SCROLL and you find that it is the FWEEP spell to turn the castor into a bat. GNUSTO FWEEP to copy it and GET ALL gives you the pile of guano and the vial. OPEN VIAL and you find an amber potion, DRINK POTION and you find that it tastes of chives and gives protection against Bloodworms. DROP AMBER VIAL and D into the Pit of Bones. From the Pit you can either go sw (to the dungeon) or s (to the torture chamber), for the moment go S. You have now entered the Torture chamber, which is (thankfully) deserted.

An Indigo vial rests against one of the devices. It is totally useless to the completion of the adventure, but for a graphic description of a large (are there any other kind?) troll beating you over the head with a piece of wood why not drink it. E into the dungeon and U into the Ruins of a castle. U will take you to a turret, which gives you a marvellous view of the terrain.

LEARN IZYUK. W and you are on the drawbridge of the castle. This collapses at random, dropping you into an alligator infested moat. It is usually safe the first time, but should you re-cross it you will need to fly back to safety. (For a change why not save the game at this point and PULVER MOAT. The castle must have been very advanced for its time, it has an automatic moat filler and you still die.)

W into the meadow (where the locusts appear on the horizon), IZYUK ME, NE to the river bank which you are flying over. SE to the entrance to the fort and safety. The izyuk spell will wear off on the third move, so it is just long enough. The river bank always collapses after the second visit so it is advisable to fly over it from the meadow. It is not advised to wait until reaching the river bank before casting the spell!!

You have now flown into the fort entrance again, you settle to the ground and go E to the parade ground. E again to the gun emplacement. PUT GUANO IN CASMOS, and you see lots of little scrolls fleeing (the Yippies). GET SCROLL and a further 10 points, READ ORDINARY SCROLL and you find that it is the Yonk spell. This is a very long and complex spell which cannot be copied, so use it wisely.

W, W, back to the fort entrance. LEARN IZYUK, IZYUK ME. You can now safely fly SW and then SW back to the Meadow. W to the forest edge. D into the Snake Pit, don't stay too long or the vipers will bite you. Mind you who would wish to dally in a snake pit. D to a safer if much more Slimy room where a passage leads S. This takes you to the crater, W to the edge of a chasm. LEARN IZYUK, IZYUK ME and you are once again flying. Fly W to the bare passage and W again to the Elbow room (so called because it leads you through a right-angle) to the N and into a tree room.

In this room money really does grow on trees. There is a tree covered in Zorkmid coins. GET COIN and the tree vanishes as you pluck the first coin. However you have gained 15 points for getting the coin. S, E, LEARN IZYUK, IZYUK ME, E, E and you are back in the crater and gently settling to the ground.

SE to the edge of the crater, G to a bend, E and you find that you have stumbled onto one of the ancient highways (possibly a relic of the great Underground Empire. E and you find yourself at a toll gate, where the Gnome guardian is sleeping. Rezrov cannot open this portal as the Gnome simply wakes up and closes it. It would appear that you have to pay your toll like any other person. WAKE GNOME, GIVE COIN TO GNOME who opens the gate and promptly falls asleep again. E and you find yourself outside a magic supplies store.

S and you are inside where a floorwaxer stands. Ignore it for the red berring it is. (Totally useless to complete the adventure.) E, E to the End of the Highway. A stone hut lies to the east, whose only interesting feature is a stone fireplace which is too small to climb up. It takes you into the entrance hall where a statue bears an inscription inviting you to "sample the delights of my Glass Labyrinth". (Later when you have found the animation spell try animating the statue. The result gave me a quiet chuckle!!)

W takes you to outside the glass arch entrance to the maze. At this point make sure that you are well rested (sleep if necessary before entering) and do commit the Fweep spell to memory at least 3 times. It is also a good idea to LEARN GASPAR and GASPAR ME before embarking.

To be continued.....

GETTING YOU STARTED

SHARO OF INOVAR
By STEVE MCLAREN played on Commodore 64

AT THE OIAS OF CAIRNRUE GET SHARO OF INOVAR, LOOK AT SHARO OF INOVAR, EXAM DIAS, INVOKE RITUAL OF OECAIRN, LOOK VIAL OF EQUAT, W, EXAM BOULDERS, EXAM SIGN, USE VIAL OF EQUAT, EXAM TREE, EXAM HOLE, GIVE SHARO OF INOVAR TO HOLE, N, GET SHARO OF INOVAR, GET STATUETTE OF VULCAT, N, N, PLACE VULCAT IN APPERTURE, GET VULCAT.....

RIGELS REVENGE
By STEVE MCLAREN played on Commodore 64

AT START: GET GOGGLES, WEAR GOGGLES, GET SATCHEL, WEAR SATCHEL, W, EXAMINE DOOR, UNTIE WIRE, OPEN DOOR, LOOK UNDER BED, PUSH BED TWICE, GET SHAPE, EXAMINE SHAPE, OPEN DOOR, W, EXAMINE CERTIFICATE, W, W, GET BONE, FOLLOW TRACKS, E, E, E, N, E, GET RUBBLE, E, D, N, EXAMINE SINK, GET MEOKIT, EXAMINE RED BUTTON, EXAMINE GREEN BUTTON, U, EXAMINE WINDOW, PRESS RED BUTTON, PULL BAR HARO, BEND BAR HARO, Before climbing through the window PUT GUN IN SATCHEL, REMOVE SATCHEL, REMOVE MEOKIT, REMOVE SUIT, DROP ALL THROUGH WINDOW, CLIMB WINDOW.....

PYRAMIO
By VICKY JACKSON played on Spectrum

I, DROP GUN, HELP, E, E, W, S, GET BOTTLE, FILL BOTTLE, W, READ MAP, W, N, E, E, N, DRINK WATER, N, N, EXAM BED, EXAM BLANKET, GRAB BLANKET, MOVE BED, SLEEP, LOOK, DROP MAP, GET LAMP, GET BLANKET, GET SHOVEL, GET ROD, S, S, E, E, W, S, FILL BOTTLE, WET BLANKET, W, INSERT ROU.....

THE LOST CITY
By TONY MELVILLE played on Spectrum

N, EXAM BODY (It's wearing a toga), STRIP BODY, WEAR TOGA, S, S, S, E, S (the Bath House), REMOVE TOGA, DROP ALL, SWIM BATH (you find a disc), GET ALL, WEAR TOGA, N, W, N, N, W, W (by a gate), EXAM GATE, INSERT DISC IN SLOT (the gate open), W, W, GET CONCH, LISTEN TO CONCH, (you hear "Destroy the magic scroll in the Mystic Cove and turn time on its head"), DROP CONCH, W, (a Mermaid asks you for the magic word), READ BOOK, SAY TO MERMAID MIRANOELLI. DROP BOOK, W, W, (in a Courtyard), CAREFULLY SEARCH FOUNTAIN.....

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

ROBIN MATTHEWS, 44 Fairwater Grove West, Llandaff, Cardiff, Tel: 0222 569115 offers help on the following adventures:

ULTIMA IV, ULTIMA V, STARFLIGHT, JINXTER, WIZARORY I, WIZARORY II, and WIZARORY III.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ENCLOSE S.A.E WHEN WRITING FOR HELP



SOLUTIONS SERVICE

The following are available from Probe at a cost of 30p per solution.

A.R.C. Adventure 100. Adventure Quest. Adventureland. Africa Gardens. Aftershock. Agatha's Folly. Alien. Altair 4. Alter Earth. Amazon. Angelique. Apache Gold. Arnold Goes Somewhere Else. Arrow of Death I. Arrow of Death II. Atalan. Avior. Aztec - Hunt for the Sun God. Aztec Tomb. Aztec Toab Revisited. Ballyhoo. Balrog and the Cat. Bards Tale I. Bards Tale III. Barney Brown. The Base. Basque Terrorists Loose in Dartford. The Beast. Beatie Quest. Beer Hunters. Behind Closed Doors. Behind Closed Doors The Sequel. Bestiary. Beyond Zork. Big Sneeze. Black Cauldron. Black Fountain. Black Knight. Blackscar Mountain. Blade of Blackpool. Blizzard Pass. Blood of the Mutineers. Blue Raiders. Boggit. Book of the Dead. Border Harrier. Borderzone. Bored of the Rings. Borrowed Time. Bounty Hunter. Brawn Free. Breakers. Brian the Bold. Brimstone. Buckeroo Banzai. Bugsy. Bulbo and the Lizard King. Bungo's Quest for Gold. Bureaucracy. The Calling. Canesto Rebellion. Cass of the Mixed-Up Shymer. Castle Adventure. Castle Blacketar. Castle Colditz. Castle Eerie. Castle of Riddles. Castle of the Skull Lord. Castle Thade. Castle Thede Revisited. The Castle. Cavern of Riches. The Challenge. Changeling. Chrono Quest. Circus. Citadel. City for Ransom. Classic Adventure. Claws of Despair. Cleric's Quest. Cloud 99. Colditz. Colossal Adventure. Colour of Magic. Commando. Corruption. Cosmos. The Count. Countdown to Doom. Cracks of Fire. Cricket Crazy. Crimson Crown. Crown of Ramshotep. Crystal Cavern. Crystal Frog. Crystal of Chentie. Crystal Quest. Crystals of Carus. Cuddles. The Cup. Curse of Crawley Manor. Curse of Shaileth. Curse of the 7 Faces. The Curse. Custard's Quest. Cutthroats. Dallas Quest. Denger Mouse in the Blackforest Chateau Ptl. Dark Lore. Dark Planet. Davy Jones Locker. Deadline. Deja Vu. Deja Vu II. Demon from the Darkside. Denis through the Drinking Glass. Desert Island. Devil's Hand. Dodgy Geezers. Domes of Sha. Don't Panic-Panic Now! Double Agent. Dracula. Dracula's Island. Dragon of Notacare. Dragon Slayer. Dragon's Tooth. Dragonworld. Dungeon Adventure. Dungeon Master. Dungeons Amethysts Alchemists 'n' everythin. Dusk over Elifton. Earthbound. Earthshock. El Dorado. Empire of Karn. Enchanted Cottage. Enchanter. Energem Enigma. Erik the Viking. Escape. Escape from ARGC. Escape from Devil's Island. Escape from Khoshima. Escape from Magic. Espionage Island. Essex. Eureka 5. Everyday Tale of a Seeker of Gold. Excalibur. Exchange. Eye of Bain. Eye of Vartan. Fahrenheit 451. Fairly Difficult Mission. Fantasia Diamond. Feasibility Experiment. Fergus Furgleton. Final Mission. Firelance. Fish. Fistfull of Blood Capsules. Flock II. Football Frenzy. For Your Thighs Only. Forest at Worlds End. Forgotten City. Forgotten Past. Fortress of Keler. Fourth Sarcophagus. Frankenstein. From Dut of a Dark Hight Sky. Fuddo and Siam. Funhouse. Future Tense. Galaxias. Gateway. Ghost Town. Gients Adventure. Gnome Ranger. Goblin Towers. Gods of War. Gold Icon. Gold Rush. Golden Apple. Golden Baton. Golden Chalice. Golden Fleece. Golden Icon. Golden Mask. Golden Rose. Golden Voyage. Gordello Incident. Grange Hill. Great Pepperingham Train Robbery. Great Pyramid. Greedy Gulch. Green Door. Gremlins. Ground Zero. Guild of Thieves. Gunslinger. H.R.H. Hammer of Grimbold. Hampstead. Harvesting Moon. Hatchet Honeymoon. Haunted House. He-Man and the Masters of the Universe. Heavy on the Magik. The Helm. The Hermitage. Heroes of Karn. Hexagonal Museum. Himalayan Odyssey. Hit. Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy. Hobbit. Hobbit De-Lux. Hobbie Hunter. Holiday to Remember. The Hollow. Hollywood Hi-Jinx. Hospital Adventure. House of Seven Gables. Hulk. Hunchback. Ice Station Zero. Imagination. In Search of Angels. Inca Curse. Inferno. Infidel. Ingrids Back. Inner Lakes. Inspector Flukeit. Institute. Introduction

Adventure. Intruder Alert. Intruder Alert (New). Invincible Island. The Island (Crystal). The Island (Virgin). The Island (Ken Bond). Jack and the Beanstalk. Jack the Ripper. Jade Necklace. Jade Stone. Jekyll and Hyde. Jewels of Babylon. Jinxter. Jolly Duplicator. Journey One Spring. Journey to the Centre of the Earth. Karyssia. Kayleth. Kentilia. King Arthur's Quest. Kingdom of Hamil. Kings Quest I. Kings Quest II. Kings Quest III. Kings Quest IV. Knight Orc. Knights Quest. Knighthmare. Kobyashi Naru. Labours of Hercules. Lancelot. Leather Goddesses of Phobos. Legacy. Legend of Craldon's Creek. Legend of the Sword. Leisure Suit Larry I. Leisure Suit Larry II. Lifeboat. Lifeterm. Loads of Midnight. London Adventure. Lords of Midnight. Lord of the Rings. Lords of Time. Lost City. Lost Crystal. Lost Drb. Lost Ruby. Lurking Horror. Madcap Manor. Mafia Contract II. Magic Mountain. Magnetic Moon (after competition ends!). Majik. Malice in Wonderland. Mandarin Murder. Manhunter. Mansion Quest. Marie Celeste. Mask of the Sun. Masters of Midworld. Matchmaker. Matt Lucas. Megacorp Pti. Merhownie's Light. Message from Andromeda. Miami Mice. Mind Foraver Voyaging. Mindbender. Mindshadow. Mindwheel. 1942 Mission. Mission X. Molesworth. Monroe Manor. Monster. Moonmist. Mordon's Quest. Moreby Jewels. Moron. Mountains of Ket. Mural. Murder at the Manor. Murder off Miami. Murder on the Waterfront. Mutant. Mutant Spiders. Mystery Funhouse. Mystery of the Indus Valley. Myores. Mystery Island. Myth. Necris Dome. Never Ending Story. New Intruder Alert. Nightmare Planet. Nine Princes in Amber. Ninja. Nosferatu - Quest for the Vampire. Not a Penny More Not a Penny Less. Nova. Nythyhel. D Zone. Ddyssey of Hope. One Dark Night. Open Door. Operation Berlin. Drbit of Doom. Panic Beneath the Sea. Pawns of War. The Pawn. Pay-Off. Pen and the Dark. Perseus and Andromeda. Pete Bog. Pharaoh's Tomb. Philosophers Stone. Picture of Innocence. Pilgrim. Pirate Adventure. Pirate's Gold. Plagues of Egypt. Planet of Death. Planetfall. Play it again Sam. Plundered Hearts. Police Quest I. Police Quest II. Prehistoric Adventure. Prelude to D-Day. Price of Magik. Pride of the Federation. Prince of Tyndel. Programmers Revenge. Projext X/Microman. Prospector. Pyramid. QDR. Quann Tulla. Quest for the Golden Eggcup (both versions). Quest for the Holy Grail. Quest for the Poorly Snail. Quest of Merravid. The Quest. Questprobe 3. Quondam. The Realm. Realm of Darkness. Rebel Planet. Red Door. Red Lion. Red Moon. Rescue from Doom. Retarded Creatures and Caverns. Return of the Joystick. Return to Doom. Return to Eden. Return to Ithica. Rigels Revenge. Ring of Power. Rising of Salandra. Robin of Sherlock. Robin of Sherwood. Robo City. Rogue Comet. Ronnie goes to Hollywood. Ruby Runnaround. Runaway. Runestone of Zaobab. S.M.A.S.H.E.D. Sandman Cometh. Satcom. Savage Island I. Savage Island II. Scapeghost. Scary Mansion. Scroll of Akbar Khan. Sea of Zirun. Seabase Delta. Search for Terrestrial Intelligence. Seas of Blood. Seastalker. Secret Mission. Secret of Bastov Manor. Secret of Life. Secret of Little Hodcome. Secret of St Brides. See-Kaa of Asslah. Serfs Taie. Serpent from Hell. Shadowgate. Shadows of Mordor. Shard of Inovar. Shards of Time. Sharpes Deeds. Sherlock (Melbourne Hse). Sherlock (Infocom). Ship of Doom. Shipwreck. Shrewsbury Key. Sinbad and the Golden Ship. Skeivulllyn Twine. Skull Island. Smugglers Cove. Smugglers Inn. Snowball. Snowqueen. Soapland. Sorcerer. Sorcerer of Claymougue Castle. Soul Hunter. Souls of Darkon. Space Quest I. Space Quest II. Space Quest III. Space Vixens. Spectre of Booballyhoo. Spellbreaker. Spiderman. Spycatcher. Spytrek. Stainless Steel Rat Seves the World. Star Reporter. Star Wreck. Starcross. Stationfall. Stoneville Manor. Stranded. Strange Ddyssey. Subsunk. Supergran. Suspended. Swamp. Tess Times in Tonetown. Temple of Terror. Temple Terror. Temple of Vran. Ten Little Indians. Terrormolinos. Theatre of Death. Thermonuclear Wargames. Theseus. Theseus and the Minotaur. Time Machine. Time Quest. Time Thief. Time

Traveller. To the Manor Bourne. Token of Ghali. Tompson Twins. Top Secret. Tower of Despair. Tracer Sanction. Transylvania. Treasure. Treasure Island. Trial of Arnold Blackwood. Trinity. Twice Shy. Twin Kingdom Valley. Ultima I. Ultima II. Ultima IV. Ulysses and the Golden Fleece. Uninvited. Upper Gumtree. Urban Upstart. Valkyrie 17. Veinor's Lair. Vanow. Vera Cruz. Very Big Cave Adventura. Village of Lost Souls. Virus. Volcano of Raka Tua. Voodoo Cattin. Voyage to Atlantis. Warlord. Waxworks. Weaver of her Dreams. Werewolf Simulator. White Door. Width of the World. Will O' the Wisp. Winter Wonderland. Wise and Fool of Arnold Blackwood. Wishbringer. Witch Hunt. Witches Cauldron. Witness. Wiz-Biz. Wizard and the Princess. Wizard of Akyrz. Wizards Challenge. Wizards Scrolls. Wizards Warrior. Wolfman. Woods of Winter. Worm In Paradise. Wychwood. Xanadu. Yukon. ZZZZ. Zaccaron Hyatery. Zac McKracken. Zodiac (Incentive). Zodiac (Tansoft). Zork I. Zork II. Zork III.

BUGS & AMUSING RESPONSES

THE MENAGERIE

By Bruce Wayne in a cave using a bat Spectrum

EXAM EGG - Whatever was in it, has leapt out and made a movie. What is left is a lump of Zyrokrat called Nigel. Communication is non-tech.

CLIMB WALL - Better not. The top is covered with broken glass. It would cut more than your swivel headed razor.

EXAM CORN - You are trying to escape from the Police, not inspecting the quality of the crop.

BENINO CLOSED DOORS II by JILL CARTER

Apart from all the rude words you can think of, try the following: TAM. SMART EGG. SHAUN. MOLLY. ODREEN. MIKE. RICHARD. MOLE. SEAN. MANDY. VS. ZENOBIA. JAMES. ANNE. BUGS. PETER. JUNE. TV. THOMAS. KEZ. RECORDS. JACKIE. WICKET.

SHARPES DEEOS by JIM STRUTHERS

SCREAM AT GHOST - "You can't kill a ghost!"

THE FOURTH PROTOCOL by JOAN PANCOTT

PART ONE - This has to be completed in a limited time and I think I only managed it because June has 31 days!

PART TWO - Starting with £50 in my wallet I spent £5 on a taxi and £1 on the underground before taking my authorisation to the treasury where I was given £200. I immediately checked my wallet which contained only £199 so perhaps there was a hidden charge for that extra day!

BOUNTY HUNTER by MARGO PORTEOUS

If you forget to remove the lead pot from your head and try to put something into it you are told "The pot contains your head!"

BUREAUCRACY by ANDREAS REUTERSWARD

For an amusing response try turning all of the three handles at once when you are in the jungle!



HELP LINE

TELEPHONE HELPLINES

ALF BALDWIN	0452 500512	MOM TO SAT 10AM TO 5PM	Spectrum.
JACK NIGNAM	0825 819631	FRI TO MON 7PM TO 10PM	Spectrum.
WALTER PODOLEY	051 8331342	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Veriouse.
DOREEN BARDOOM	085 3B2 508	MOM TO FRI 8PM TO 10PM	Spectrum.
		WEEKENDS ANY REASONABLE TIME	
MIKE BRAILSFORD	0582 757788	SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM	Veriouse.
HERC	0424 434214	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Ateri ST.
JASON DEAME	0482 822750	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Amiga.
JOAN PAMCOTT	0305 784155	SUN TO SAT MOON TO 10PM	Amstrad.
ISLA DOMALOSOM	041 8540602	SUN TO SAT MOON TO 12PM	Amstrad.
NIC RUMSEY	03212 2737	SUN TO SAT 8PM TO 10PM	Veriouse.
REG LILLEY	0392 215521	TUE TO SUN 6PM TO 11PM	Commodore
BARBARA			
BASSINGTONWAIGTHE	0035 28174	SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM	BBC.
BARBARA GIBB	051 7226731	ANY EVENING FROM 7PM	BBC.
DAVE BARKER	01 732 1513	MOM TO FRI 7PM TO 10PM	Veriouse.
STUART WHYTE	061 8804645	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Amstrad.
ROBIM MATTHEW	0222 568115	ANY REASONABLE TIME	IBM PC
SOMZ	0482 654036	MOM TO SAT 10AM TO 11PM	Veriouse.

*** THE ULTIMATE INFOCOM HELPLINE ***

If you need help with an Infocom adventure then who better to help you than A GRUE! Ring GRUE on 0885 573141 between 7:30pm to 8pm Mon to Fri. Or write to 64 COUNTY ROAD, ORMSKIRK, WEST LAMCS, L38 1QH. Please note that GRUE will give help on INFOCOM ONLY!

HAMOY'S HOTLINE

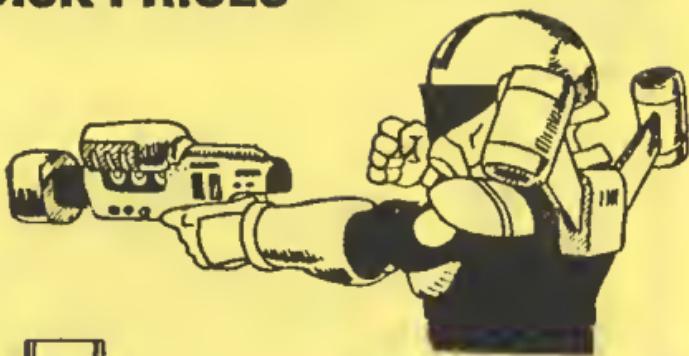
If you need to contact Probe please telephone 0482 77305. I will be available at all reasonable times but please try to telephone between 10am and 10pm. If you are telephoning for help on an adventure then please try to phone during office hours as the solutions are on hand during that time.

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ONLY RING AT THE TIMES SHOWN



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